



Security Council

Sixty-first year

Provisional

5457th meeting

Tuesday, 13 June 2006, 10.25 a.m.
New York

<i>President:</i>	Ms. Løj	(Denmark)
<i>Members:</i>	Argentina	Mr. Mayoral
	China	Mr. Li Junhua
	Congo	Mr. Gayama
	France	Mr. Duclos
	Ghana	Mr. Christian
	Greece	Mr. Vassilakis
	Japan	Mr. Oshima
	Peru	Ms. Tincopa
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Nasser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	Slovakia	Mr. Matulay
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mr. Manongi
	United States of America	Ms. Wolcott Sanders

Agenda

The situation in Timor-Leste

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06-38411 (E)



The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Timor-Leste

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Australia, Austria, Brazil, Fiji, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Singapore and Timor-Leste, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Guterres (Timor-Leste) took a seat at the Council table; the representatives of the other aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Ian Martin, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Martin to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them photocopies of a letter dated 13 June 2006 from the Secretary-General transmitting a letter from the President, Prime Minister and President of the National Parliament of Timor-Leste, which will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/2006/383.

I welcome the presence of the Secretary-General and invite him to take the floor.

The Secretary-General: I am deeply concerned over the evolution of the situation in Timor-Leste since the incidents of 28 and 29 April. The violence and unrest that Timor-Leste has experienced in recent weeks is particularly painful because, in many respects, Timor-Leste is a child of the international community.

Through four successive missions — the United Nations Mission in East Timor, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor, the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor and the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste — the United Nations has played a key role in laying the foundation for Timor-Leste's democratic institutions and processes.

Today, those institutions and processes stand exposed. The sad events of recent weeks reflect shortcomings not only on the part of the Timorese leadership, but also on the part of the international community in inadequately sustaining Timor-Leste's nation-building process. We have learnt, at a painful price for Timor-Leste, that the building of institutions on the basis of fundamental principles of democracy and the rule of law is not a simple process that can be completed within a few short years.

Clearly, tremendous work lies ahead, both for the Government of Timor-Leste and for the international community, but, as I told the Timorese people in a video message on 1 June, the United Nations is determined not to abandon them at this critical time of need. I therefore appeal to the Security Council to stand united in supporting Timor-Leste's return to normality so that its citizens may resume their work of building a peaceful and prosperous nation.

In that context, last month I dispatched My Special Envoy, Ian Martin, on a short mission to review the situation on the ground. Since his return last Friday, I have benefited greatly from his assessment, which he will share with the Council today. His report highlights not only the immediate security challenges facing Timor-Leste but also the complex political situation there and other problems faced by that country.

In conclusion, I would like to mention that on 8 June I received a letter from the Senior Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, José

Ramos-Horta, on behalf of the Government, inviting the United Nations to establish an independent special inquiry commission "to review the incidents on 28 and 29 April and on 23, 24 and 25 May, and other related events on issues which contributed to the crisis".

In response to that request, I am asking the High Commissioner for Human Rights to take the lead in establishing such a commission, and I will keep the Council informed of his progress.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

At this meeting the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Ian Martin, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Martin: As members of the Council know and have welcomed, I was sent by the Secretary-General to Timor-Leste to assess the situation there at first hand, working closely with the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) and the Timorese leadership. I was in the country from 29 May to 7 June, during which time I had extensive discussions across the political spectrum. These included long and frank conversations with President Xanana Gusmão, Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri and Foreign Minister José Ramos-Horta, who also assumed the defence portfolio during my visit. I also talked with other ministers, with the commander of the defence force, key members of opposition parties, the Bishop of Dili, civil society representatives and the diplomatic community. I travelled to western districts to meet leaders and political supporters of protesting soldiers who have been dismissed or put themselves outside the command of the army.

The Council has been regularly briefed on the unfolding crisis, and I will not revisit the tragic course of events or its serious humanitarian consequences. What I think the Council will most want to know is how successfully it is now being addressed; what the underlying causes are which require the longer-term attention of the political leadership and the support of the international community; and what expectations are there now of the United Nations.

While I was in Dili, the two senior constitutional bodies which advise the President, the Council of State and the Superior Council for Defence and Security, agreed upon a framework and a plan of action within

which the political leadership is addressing the security crisis. This involves the President assuming the main responsibility for defence and security, in close collaboration and permanent interaction with the Prime Minister and the President of the Parliament. The Ministers of Defence and Interior resigned and were replaced. All those who now share responsibility for security matters expressed to me their commitment to working together within that framework, which will indeed require their close and continuous collaboration in the weeks ahead.

Bringing the security situation fully under control also requires effective coordination with and among the military and police forces of the four countries whose deployment the Government of Timor-Leste requested and the Council has welcomed. There, too, the Timorese leadership has committed itself to regular coordination meetings of the key actors, and the forces themselves continue to work on operational arrangements. I left Dili just as the Portuguese police force began its operations there and before the advance parties of police from Australia, Malaysia and New Zealand were joined by the numbers necessary to begin patrolling. I believe that, as they do so, the arson and looting in Dili will be brought fully under control. Fortunately, it has not spread beyond the capital, although disturbing tensions are emerging in some districts.

That, however, will not in itself be the end of the security crisis. The leaders of the soldiers or ex-soldiers outside the command of the defence force told me, as they have told others, that they would take no offensive armed action and would respect the authority of the President. The defence force itself is cooperating fully with the international forces, and its commander, Brigadier-General Taur Matan Ruak, assured me of his commitment to the Constitution and of his determination that there should be no more war in his country. However, weapons from the defence force and from the police service have been distributed to civilians, including former resistance fighters.

The President's plan of action provides for the controlled return and audit of weapons of the security forces, with international participation. The international forces have already recovered substantial numbers of weapons, and the defence force command states that it has recalled those it had distributed. But as long as groups which remain armed or have access

to arms remain disaffected, the security situation cannot be said to have been resolved.

Parliamentary and presidential elections are due in Timor-Leste by May 2007, and are, of course, where political competition should be democratically resolved. But segments of the population are not accepting that the present Government should remain in place until then. Such opposition is reported to be widespread in western districts and in the church. Following the resignations of the Ministers of Defence and Interior, there has been one sizeable demonstration in Dili calling for the resignation of Prime Minister Alkatiri. At times this has been stated by the leaders of the soldiers or ex-soldiers outside the army command to be a precondition for dialogue. Such demonstrations carry the prospect of those loyal to FRETILIN, the ruling party, staging counter-demonstrations. There thus remains the potential for violent clashes between different groups of demonstrators, at what remains a tense time in the capital.

The most serious underlying cause of the current crisis, and perhaps the biggest challenge for future stability, lies in the security sector. The crisis has revealed political cleavages not only between the defence force and the police service, which has long been a subject of concern, but also internally in each institution. Initial recruitment to the defence force was from the former FALINTIL fighters for independence; selection was controversial at the time and has been since. The majority of officers and first recruits were from the eastern districts, where FALINTIL remained active until 1999. Later recruits were younger and mostly from western districts; it is many of them who have alleged discriminatory practices against them by eastern officers.

Long before independence, Xanana Gusmão, as commander of FALINTIL, had taken the resistance forces outside FRETILIN to be the army of the nation rather than of a political party, but it is now alleged by some that FRETILIN has been trying to draw the defence force command closer to itself.

Initial recruitment to the police service was also controversial, with criticism of the absorption of men and particularly officers from the Indonesian police. The Minister of the Interior, Rogerio Lobato, who has now resigned, was seen from the time of his appointment in 2002 to be politicizing the police, initially as a counterweight to the President's perceived

influence over the defence force. In November 2002, the President called publicly for his dismissal. In 2004, heavy weapons were imported for three special units formed within the police service. The Minister was alleged to have favoured westerners within the command structure, as a result of which an eastern so-called nationalist faction arose within the police, which broke from the chain of command in recent weeks. The national command structure, at least two of the special units and the Dili police have disintegrated during the recent violence, although the police in the districts have mostly continued their regular duties.

The immediate issues are thus the future of the soldiers or ex-soldiers outside the command of the defence force, and the re-establishment of a national police command structure and a Dili police force. But many of my interlocutors saw a need for fundamental reconsideration of the role of the defence force, the existence of special units within the police service, and the nature of its weaponry.

The sudden elevation of East-West friction as ostensibly a central factor in the crises in the army, the defence force and the police force is potentially the most dangerous of the cleavages for national unity. It has been reflected in the targeting of houses for arson attacks in Tli and even in tensions in the camps of internally displaced persons. Although this division has some historical roots, political and religious leaders maintain that it is not deep-seated. But their active leadership will be required to heal the recent wounds in which regional tensions have played a part.

In political terms, the current crisis is centred upon the dominance of the ruling FRETILIN party and the challenges to it. Critics accuse the FRETILIN leadership of heading the country towards a one-party State by using its dominant position in Parliament and its superior political machinery, which has been further strengthened by access to power and State resources. The manner in which a challenge to the party leadership was countered at the recent FRETILIN Congress has added to this perception, and opposition parties express no confidence in the intention of FRETILIN to allow a level playing field for free and fair elections next year. The opposite perspective, held by FRETILIN's leadership, is that the current crisis stems from the failure of opposition parties and domestic critics, including the church, to challenge the Government democratically and from their efforts to

create an institutional crisis and even bring about a coup.

This conflict is exacerbated by the fact that FRETILIN's opponents look to President Gusmão as a guarantor of pluralism, as indeed he sees himself. He remains the most important national figure and has the political legitimacy of direct election, while some believe that the Constituent Assembly elected under United Nations administration in 2001 should not have become a full-term post-independence Parliament. But the presidency is constitutionally almost powerless, and the current crisis has thus led to pressure on the President to act outside the constitution, which he has resisted.

I reiterated to all the Secretary-General's message — broadcast, as he said, to the people of Timor-Leste — that corrective measures should be taken within the framework of constitution, that the United Nations would stand with Timor-Leste in this time of trial, and that it will stay to assist in the resumption of the task of nation-building. I have reported back to the Secretary-General what was said to me about the role the Timorese would like to have the United Nations play in the period ahead.

First, there is a pressing need for an impartial investigation of recent events involving loss of life, in particular the disputed number of killings that occurred in Dili on 28 and 29 April and the killing by soldiers of unarmed police officers under United Nations escort and injury to two United Nations police officers on 25 May, as well as several other incidents between these dates that involved the use of lethal force. Those events were part of the spiral of violence involving soldiers, police and civilians. Each party to the conflict has its own accusations to make against others. Thus not only is there the need for accountability for serious human rights violations, there will be no political reconciliation unless these accusations are investigated and the truth established and made known.

The Government has requested, in the Foreign Minister's letter of 8 June to the Secretary-General, that the United Nations establish an independent special inquiry commission to conduct the necessary investigation, and I strongly support this request. My interlocutors all believed that evidence of criminal responsibility should be conveyed to and further investigated and prosecuted in the Timorese justice system, in which international judges, prosecutors and

defence lawyers provided by the United Nations are participating.

Secondly, there is a strong consensus that the United Nations should play a major role in the organization of elections in 2007 and in ensuring confidence that they will be free and fair. The Government recognizes the need for further discussion with opposition parties and civil society about the electoral arrangements, and that would help define the role to be requested of the United Nations.

Thirdly, the review and restoration of the security sector is a crucial task. In the past, international support has been a combination of United Nations and bilateral arrangements. During my visit I found a clear consensus that the United Nations should play the major role in relation to the police, and that has now been requested by the letter of 11 June to the Secretary-General from the President of the Republic, the President of the Parliament and the Prime Minister. Required international assistance to policing now extends from actual policing during the period until the national police service is again able to take full responsibility, to the long-term institutional development that was not completed and has now encountered a serious setback and need for review. Police arrangements in the context of the elections require special attention, as had already been recognized.

Fourthly, the crisis appears to have led many Timorese political leaders to see a greater need for international support to State institutions than was previously envisaged and a greater desire for the United Nations to offer its good offices, sensitively and with full respect for national sovereignty, to foster political and community reconciliation.

It was a great personal sadness for me to witness again, as I did in 1999, houses burning in Dili and families displaced from their homes by fear and to know that many people had been killed. But the current situation is not about Timor-Leste being a failed State. Rather it is about a four-year old State struggling to stand on its own two feet and learn to practice democratic governance. The message I carried from the Secretary-General, and which he broadcasted directly to the people of Timor-Leste, was that now is not a time for despair, but for action. It is time for the leaders to act together and time for the international community to remain focused and engaged in Timor-

Leste. If this crisis leads to the necessary reflection, acceptance of responsibility and renewed commitment, then I believe it can prove to have been a terrible wake-up call, which sets Timor-Leste back on its path to a united and prosperous nation.

The President: I thank Mr. Martin for his briefing.

In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than five minutes, in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate the texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber. I now give the floor to the representative of Timor-Leste.

Mr. Guterres (Timor-Leste): Madam President, it is a great honour for us to see you presiding over this meeting. It is also a great honour to see the Secretary-General in this meeting, and we thank him for the efforts that he has undertaken to support East Timor. It is a great honour too to see Special Envoy Ian Martin again, and Special Representative Tamrat Samuel. We have known them for many years and we know of their dedication to the country and the role they have played in the birth of Timor-Leste as a nation.

I have with me a statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and Minister for Defence, Mr. José Ramos Horta. I will read out only parts of that statement but, due to today's special circumstances, I beg for your patience.

"Madame President, I offer my sincere apologies to you and to the members of the Security Council for my absence, but demands for my presence in Timor-Leste at this time are extensive.

"As the Council meets, I am visiting rural areas of the country, covering east and west, continuing to take the State to the people. I am also able to listen to their needs and to communicate them back to our President and our Government. In addition, I have addressed our national Parliament, upon the invitation of its President.

"I thank the Congolese presidency and the other members of the Council for the press statement of 24 May 2006 (Press release

SC/8728), which gave international legitimacy to the deployment of the multinational forces of Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand and Portugal.

"On behalf of all Timorese, I offer profuse thanks to the Joint Task Force, all the components of which were able to respond promptly and efficiently to quickly quell the violence. However, the forces were not able to prevent the extensive looting and burning and the displacement of tens of thousands of Timorese, as law and order broke down in some quarters, with the earlier disintegration of the National Police Force of Timor-Leste (PNTL) in Dili.

"I also offer profuse thanks to Portugal, which, from a great distance, showed no hesitation in deploying its elite police force, the Republican National Guard (GNR). The Timorese people's experience with the GNR under the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor was a positive one, and the GNR's presence has been demanded by every sector of the Timorese society. It is our wish that, in a new United Nations mission, the GNR play a vital role in maintaining law and order. We are equally grateful that Malaysia has made available a similar rapid-reaction police force.

"The humanitarian situation has been managed very well by our Minister for Labour and Community Reinsertion, His Excellency Mr. Arsenio Bano, who chairs the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Assistance Group, which includes other Government ministries and agencies, the United Nations Country Team, the International Organization for Migration, international non-governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and the heads of specific sector working groups. In a very short time, they, along with Minister Bano, were able to mobilize and provide services to the large number of internally displaced persons. I thank the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for its coordination assistance and for the launch yesterday in Dili, New York and Geneva of the flash appeal. A special reference should be made to the impressive efforts of our Church, which has provided shelter and care to tens of thousands of people.

"East Timorese and foreign doctors and nurses, including Cubans and Chinese, have performed and continue to perform their admirable duties. We are grateful to all of them.

"We note with deep appreciation the bilateral assistance provided by our friends, including our closest neighbour, Indonesia, which, in its own time of suffering caused by natural disasters, reached out to Timor-Leste with the delivery of much-needed humanitarian aid.

"The international forces on the ground are continuing their efforts to collect weapons from individuals. Through voluntary surrender or enforced confiscation, close to 1,000 assorted weapons have been collected.

"Pursuant to a decision of the Supreme Council of Defence and Security, on Friday, 9 June, our own defence force, the Timorese Armed Forces (F-FDTL), participated and assisted in the commencement of a weapons inventory inspection operation, undertaken with an international observation team comprising military personnel from Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Portugal, the United States and the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL). The preliminary reports that I have received indicate that it is a success.

"The second part of the operation concerns the PNTL and will take place this week. Members of the PNTL have begun to surrender their weapons and have voluntarily agreed to be cajoled in Dili and to hand over their weapons to the Australian Defence Force. By this weekend, the new Minister of Interior will submit to His Excellency President Xanana Gusmão a complete list of all weapons in the PNTL official inventory. That list will be checked against existing weapons in use by PNTL officers or in the armoury.

"This level of cooperation would not have been possible without my President. His moral standing and influence among all sectors of Timorese society are high. He was pivotal in preventing irregular armed forces — reservists — from leaving Baucau for Dili in the last week of May to join in the violent disturbances. My President's leadership has been fundamental to the stabilization process.

"The graveness of our current crisis causes me great sadness. However, I take this opportunity to assure members that the situation is redeemable. The good work done by the United Nations and the international community, together with the Timorese leadership and the Timorese people, has taken root in the form of State institutions that have had the capacity to continue operations, even at the height of the current crisis.

"Ministries and associated agencies have continued to function, contrary to some media reports that depict us as a failing State. Those ministries and agencies include, but are not limited to, the following: the presidency; Health; Labour and Community Reinsertion; State Administration; Agriculture; Education; Justice, which is working alongside the Combined Joint Task Force in the area of detention, investigation and prosecution; Telecommunications, including Electricidade de Timor-Leste and Timor Telecom, which kept the electricity, telephone and Internet services working throughout; Radio Television Timor-Leste, the national television and radio broadcaster; customs, the Port Authority, which is doubling as a military headquarters; air services; and my own Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence.

"Timor-Leste's inaugural petroleum exploration bid round was completed on 22 May 2006, when the Prime Minister announced the winners of the bid with the publication of the Evaluation Commission's final report.

"Many shops and restaurants are open — many stayed open — and some taxis and microlets continue to operate. The fact that the private sector continues to function alongside the public sector is indicative of our gains so far.

"The Government has kept the 2006-2007 budget process on track. I wish to provide members with some specific detail, as it demonstrates the Government's competence in this regard and its responsiveness to the people's needs, particularly in the area of rural development. The Council of Ministers meets tomorrow to consider a revised State budget for 2006-2007, which is expected to exceed \$315 million and to be in line with the State's

sustainable income levels. That is in addition to the \$140 million in donor assistance for development. A total of \$110 million will be allocated to capital and development, with \$50 million for public works. "Lastly, all public sector workers will receive a cost-of-living adjustment to cover cost increases in fuel and food.

"I should make a distinction for members with regard to the areas of Timor-Leste affected by the crisis. Those areas are limited primarily to the capital, Dili; the other 12 districts have continued to function, with all services operating, including the PNTL police service, whose basic infrastructure has remained intact in the districts. There is, of course, no guarantee that an outbreak of violence will not occur in the regions while the country is in a politically precarious state.

"The border area that Timor-Leste shares with Indonesia has remained calm. I have visited the border on three occasions in the past month, the last visit being of three days' duration. I was accompanied by His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Sofwan, the Indonesian ambassador to Timor-Leste. I thank the Indonesian authorities for assisting us in keeping our common border area safe and stable.

"I came back inspired by the professionalism of the PNTL Border Patrol Unit and of the military forces operating on the Indonesian side. I was, however, concerned about the poor living conditions of our police, which are an incomprehensible example of neglect by our own Government.

"I wish to inform members of our initiatives vis-à-vis political dialogue, as political peace is as necessary to democratic health as physical security. I have been in contact on more than one occasion with every key person and group involved in the conflict. My President has begun to meet each individual and group directly involved in the conflict, as the first step in establishing an all-inclusive political dialogue, which all have agreed to. The all-inclusive dialogue will commence within the next two weeks, with the arrangements in place by the week's end. It will be co-chaired by my President

and our two Bishops, the Bishop of Dili and the Bishop of Baucau.

"President Xanana has provided leadership in securing the agreement of all the key individuals and groups that an all-inclusive dialogue was the approach needed to resolve political problems and, furthermore, that all political problems needed to be resolved within our constitutional framework. That recognition demonstrates a commitment to the democratic culture that has begun to take root in Timor-Leste.

"Parallel to the all-inclusive dialogue will be the special inquiry commission that Timor-Leste has requested, as outlined in my letter to the Secretary-General of 8 June 2006. The President, the Prime Minister, the Government, the F-FDTL, the PNTL, religious leaders and civil society all welcome an impartial and independent inquiry, as an important step in reaching a settlement and upholding the rule of law. It is our fervent desire that the special inquiry commission commence immediately. In the interim, the Australian side, through its Federal Police service in collaboration with the Prosecutor General's Office, is undertaking preliminary work to secure some crime scenes and preserve evidence.

"Members will be aware that I have taken on the sensitive portfolio of Defence. My motivation in accepting — and I cannot but say that, as a Nobel Peace Laureate, I am a most reluctant Defence Minister — is to lift the standing of the F-FDTL and to help heal the wounds between the F-FDTL and the PNTL and between both forces and the community.

"While peace has been restored overall, the security and law and order situation remain precarious. It is acknowledged by all that our institutions of State and our democratic culture are fragile. It is, however, our considered view that sustained international support by way of a United Nations police force under United Nations command, with the PNTL working under its auspices — as outlined in the letter to the Secretary-General of 11 June 2006 on the matter, signed by my President, the President of the

Parliament and my Prime Minister — needs to be provided without delay.

"Before I turn to the needs of a new United Nations mission, I wish to reiterate that we Timorese are deeply indebted to the deploying countries but also that, as the emergency situation is nearing an end, it is important that our attention turn to the issue of the transition to a peacekeeping force under the United Nations umbrella, as was the case with the International Force for East Timor in 1999.

"We believe that it is essential to have an international presence under the United Nations flag so as to reduce political and diplomatic tensions. Hence, it is our considered view that the current force in Timor-Leste should in due course be replaced by a United Nations-mandated peacekeeping force.

"It is also our considered view that the current force and its successor — as, indeed, other components of a new United Nations mission — should also comprise a greater number of countries in the region, including, we hope, our friends in Fiji, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and other countries that stand ready to contribute to such a force. We were very proud that a country member of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) — namely, Malaysia — came to us at our time of need and was able to respond quickly and professionally. We are very grateful to Malaysia and other ASEAN countries that have indicated a willingness to respond.

"I want to issue a caveat regarding a new United Nations mission: the reality is that we have not been able to undertake a comprehensive needs assessment for such a mission. It is our intention to enter into detailed discussions with the United Nations on this matter in the immediate future. I can, however, offer some preliminary comments regarding our request for an international police force and a special inquiry commission.

"First, the time frame must be long enough to enable our State institutions to move beyond the fragile stage, consistent with our being an infant State. As members know, it is a Herculean task to build a nation almost from scratch, and

while we have succeeded, it is an infant nation that we now have. Collectively, we did a remarkable job of nation-building, initially under the stewardship of the late Sergio Vieira de Mello.

"The main focus of the United Nations mission will be the maintenance of a secure environment that involves, *inter alia*, a multinational military presence, a United Nations police force, presidential and parliamentary elections organized, administered and conducted by the United Nations and key civilian advisory positions, with some embedded in Government administration alongside capacity-building positions, so that our State institutions can be strengthened, along with civil society.

"I wish to place on public record my sincere thanks to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Sukehiro Hasegawa, for his good work during the current crisis. Mr. Hasegawa has also served the people of Timor-Leste in an exemplary and selfless manner and has a special place in our hearts, as indeed do our friends from Japan, Mr. Hasegawa's home country, who have made a great contribution to our country.

"I also want to also convey our profound thanks to the United Nations police for their wonderful efforts in attempting to broker a peaceful resolution to a very critical situation on 25 May. We deeply empathize with them; but they acted professionally, selflessly and in the best traditions of the civil servants of the United Nations. We salute them.

"The decision is now in your hands, Madam President and members of the Council. We require your sustained engagement. We, the people of Timor-Leste, await your consideration."

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Australia.

Mr. Hill (Australia): We appreciate the opportunity to contribute to this discussion on Timor-Leste. Australia is grateful for the Security Council's prompt attention in the form of the Council President's statement of 25 May welcoming the presence of the international stabilization force. The rapid dispatch of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy, Ian Martin, was

also a welcome development, and we appreciated the opportunity to listen to his briefing today.

Since 1999, the United Nations has, of course, been integrally involved in, first, bringing security to Timor-Leste and, then, beginning the process of nation-building. There have been notable successes, but the recent crisis has demonstrated how fragile those successes have been and the need, again, for the international community — including, importantly, the United Nations — to help consolidate those successes.

As the Security Council is aware, Australia has again been deeply involved in the international response to deliver urgent help. Along with Malaysia, New Zealand and Portugal, we have, at the request of Timor-Leste, deployed military and police to restore stability. We have deployed some 2,500 military personnel, with about 1,900 on the ground at present. We have deployed 150 police, and we are building that up to 200. We believe that that presence will be necessary for some time. The international deployment is now meeting Timor-Leste's immediate security needs. The presence of the deployment has stabilized the situation to the extent that violence is now sporadic, rather than continuing. Arson attacks have been substantially reduced. About 100 people have been arrested and are being processed through the justice system, which is again functioning.

While four countries are contributing to the international deployment, there may be scope for broadening such participation on a voluntary basis and the request of the Government of Timor-Leste. We see no need for the stabilization force to be brought under direct United Nations mandate. We want the United Nations to be free to focus on, and dedicate resources to, addressing Timor-Leste's longer-term needs through a new Security Council-mandated mission.

The international community must build on the momentum that has been provided by the stabilization force. Australia would support a further 28-day extension of the mandate of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste, but it encourages the Council, supported by the Secretariat, to move urgently to design and implement a new mission. The new mission, we believe, should be established under Chapter VII of the Charter. In designing the mission it is important to recognize that the problems of today are fundamentally different from those faced by the East Timorese people in 1999. The issues today are of

internal governance and the failure of law and order, and it was in response to those challenges that the Government of Timor-Leste requested the assistance of external military forces.

The new United Nations mission should, in our view, complement the international stabilization force and should address the key longer-term challenges facing Timor-Leste. In our view, the first area of focus for a new mission should be to establish an environment conducive to political and community reconciliation. It will be of vital importance to Timor-Leste's long-term stability that the United Nations facilitate the efforts urgently needed on the part of Timor-Leste's leaders to build political dialogue and reconciliation. It is, of course, also crucial that those leaders step up and take responsibility for achieving good governance and consolidating democracy within the framework of Timor-Leste's constitution. They must lead their country beyond the point where international assistance is necessary whenever problems occur.

The United Nations must also focus on helping to restore the confidence of the people of Timor-Leste. In the short term, that will include addressing the needs of internally displaced people. The international community, along with the United Nations, must also conduct a thorough and independent investigation into the recent violent events. Further, the United Nations should assist Timor-Leste to prepare for and hold free, fair and informed elections.

The second key area on which the United Nations should focus its attention and efforts, in our view, is the strengthening of the Timor-Leste justice system. On operational policing, careful planning will need to go into managing the transition from the police working within the stabilization force to a United Nations police presence. Close consultation with Timor-Leste's leaders will be required on the issue of interaction by a future United Nations policing presence with Timor-Leste's police force. Australia believes that there is a case for appointing a foreign national as Police Chief. As a longer-term goal, consideration must also be given to structural reform of Timor-Leste's security forces. Strong court and prison administration is an essential part of achieving a functioning justice system. There is a role for the United Nations in helping to achieve both goals. It is desirable that the United Nations should also oversee the prison system, at least

in the short term, to ensure its continued operation, irrespective of political developments.

The third area on which the United Nations should focus is strengthening the machinery of government in Timor-Leste to ensure the continued delivery of basic services in the short term and to support capacity-building in the longer term.

Finally, we would suggest that a particular area of focus is assisting the Government of Timor-Leste to identify opportunities to develop economic growth and so generate employment and address the chronic and destabilizing levels of unemployment. The United Nations and its agencies, as well as bilateral friends, can all play a part in addressing that challenge.

Australia, as a long-term and steadfast friend of Timor-Leste, would be prepared to contribute to such a mission while playing an ongoing role in the stabilization of the security situation.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Portugal.

Mr. Salgueiro (Portugal): I am grateful for this opportunity to address the Security Council. I would like start by thanking Mr. Ian Martin for his comprehensive briefing on the situation in Timor-Leste. Mr. Martin is an old friend of Timor-Leste, and it is good to see him once again. I also take this opportunity to commend Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and his staff for their work and for the sacrifices they have made throughout this difficult period. I assure them of our willingness to continue to cooperate closely with the United Nations on the ground and to support the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) and United Nations agencies in Timor-Leste.

Portugal concurs with the statement which the representative of Austria will soon make on behalf of the European Union. In my national capacity, I wish to make the following remarks.

When I addressed the Security Council at its public meeting of 5 May (see S/PV.5432), I underlined that Timor-Leste had been an important responsibility and a very large investment by the international community and the United Nations. I also said that we should do everything in our power to secure that investment and strengthen the fragile peace and democracy in Timor-Leste. In the light of recent events and as stated by the Secretary-General, we need to

carefully assess the lessons of the current unrest to see whether we have withdrawn the United Nations peacekeeping forces too soon. Like Mr. Ian Martin, we think also that the Timorese need to be assured that the United Nations will be with them in the present and in the future.

A Portuguese gendarmerie force totalling 127 personnel arrived in Dili on Saturday, 3 June. In accordance with the memorandum of understanding signed between the Governments of Portugal and Timor-Leste on 25 May 2006, this paramilitary police force is to operate in Dili and its surroundings, under the authority of President Xanana Gusmão and Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri, and with Portuguese operational command. It will also provide, in the future, assistance and training to the Rapid Intervention Unit of the Timor-Leste police. In an attempt to improve cooperation and coordination between forces on the ground, an interim arrangement has been agreed upon regarding operations by the Portuguese gendarmerie force and interaction with the other international forces.

The international forces were deployed to assist a sovereign country, on the basis of bilateral arrangements and with the support of the Security Council. However, the current turmoil shows the need for renewed long-term involvement by the United Nations in Timor-Leste. In defining the future mandate of the United Nations presence in Timor-Leste, we should first and foremost listen to the views of the Timorese, as we just did. We should respect Timorese ownership, since the Timor-Leste of today is not the Timor-Leste of 1999. Since 20 May 2002, Timor-Leste has been an independent, sovereign country. As mentioned by the Secretary-General in his most recent reports, Timor-Leste has made impressive progress in many areas of governance and institution-building, with the support of UNOTIL and bilateral and multilateral partners.

Timor-Leste needs our help. Timor-Leste is not a failed State. We are dealing with a deep political crisis which is having very serious security and humanitarian repercussions. That crisis is far from over. Also, thousands of weapons are missing and could be used in further actions of violent destabilization throughout the country.

Reconciliation will be a long and difficult process, but it is a first, much-needed, step for

Timorese society to take. Political solutions can then be sought, and hopefully found, by the Timorese themselves. The Timorese should remain the masters of their choices regarding the governance of their own country. The support of Portugal for Timor-Leste will continue to be guided by that fundamental principle. There is a clear need for continued multilateral and bilateral assistance and support. But, as in any sovereign and independent State, in the end it will be up to the Timorese to decide, in accordance with their constitutional and democratic system, on issues like justice, the nature and role of the armed forces and the police, economic governance, administration and so on.

Timor-Leste is a child of the United Nations. It therefore needs the universality and impartiality of the United Nations, which must once again take a leading role. In our view, that new mission should be able to facilitate political dialogue and reconciliation, restore and maintain security and ensure that the 2007 elections will be peaceful, free and fair. That is what the Timorese expect from us, and therefore that should be our mission as soon as possible. In that regard, I can assure you and members of the Council, Madam President, that Portugal stands ready to contribute with forces to serve under United Nations command and control.

Justice is a key element for long-lasting political reconciliation. It is important to establish the truth regarding recent violence, namely, that which occurred on 28 April and 25 May. We welcome the request for a special inquiry commission as outlined in the letter of Foreign Minister Ramos-Horta to the Secretary-General of 9 June 2006. We especially welcome the fact that all relevant actors consider that a necessary step to reach a settlement and uphold the rule of law.

We are also concerned by the recent attacks on and looting of the Ministry of Justice, the General Prosecutor's office and the records of the Serious Crimes Unit, particularly the records regarding the crimes of 1999. It is reassuring to know that the United Nations has backup copies of those records. Those sad events underline the need to ensure that all those responsible for the serious crimes committed in Timor-Leste are held accountable, so as to respond to the legitimate desire for justice of all those affected by the violence. We therefore continue to look forward to the report of the Secretary-General outlining a legally

sound and feasible approach to the question of accountability in Timor-Leste.

Portugal recalls the responsibility of the international community and of the Security Council in relation to Timor-Leste. Portugal will remain committed to the consolidation of peace, democracy and full political independence of Timor-Leste.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of New Zealand.

Ms. Banks (New Zealand): May I first thank the Secretary-General and the Security Council for the steps that they have taken to date in response to the situation in Timor-Leste. I would also like to thank Special Envoy Ian Martin for his briefing. We welcome as well the update from Minister Ramos-Horta conveyed to us this morning by the Ambassador. We hear his message that the situation is redeemable.

The situation has improved since the arrival of forces from our four countries, but it remains fragile. New Zealand's deployment in Timor-Leste currently includes 176 troops, supported by a military planning team in Australia and logistical and air-transport assets. We appreciate the expressions of support for the deployment of our forces in response to the request from Timor-Leste. New Zealand is fully committed to working closely with the forces from Australia, Malaysia and Portugal, and in close coordination with the Government of Timor-Leste and the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL). Such coordination and collaboration by all parties is vital.

Our immediate focus has been on restoring the law and order situation. We have also contributed to humanitarian relief efforts. The New Zealand Government is still giving consideration to the shape and duration of New Zealand's present deployment. But our expectation is that our forces will remain in Timor-Leste while they are needed. Options for further assistance to Timor-Leste, including a possible police contribution, are being considered by my Government.

As the situation has now changed drastically, we need time for the Government of Timor-Leste and the international community to assess the options for the path forward. The input of Special Envoy Ian Martin and the needs-assessment mission will be essential components, complemented by the views of contributing countries and regional partners. New

Zealand stands ready to assist and participate as the team undertakes its work.

We note that any future United Nations mission, and all multilateral and bilateral partners, must work with Timor-Leste to build up real institutional capacity. New Zealand supports the extension of UNOTIL's mandate for a further period, to allow sufficient time for the needs assessment-mission to visit and report back expeditiously.

The Government of Timor-Leste has a decisive role to play throughout this process, especially given that true stabilization can only occur once the underlying political issues are resolved. New Zealand sympathizes with the major challenges being addressed. Some of those result from the complex process of nation-building, with its inherent vulnerabilities. We urge and encourage the Timorese leadership to address those challenges constructively, constitutionally and in a manner that promotes trust and respect. We look forward to the return of security and stability to Timor-Leste, so that confidence in the future can be restored as quickly as possible.

Careful consideration needs to be given to the next steps — not just on the security and policing side but to all the components of stabilization and recovery. As we all know, the investment by the Timorese people, bilateral partners and the international community has been significant. It is important that the United Nations system and the international community send the message of a long-term commitment to supporting and assisting Timor-Leste. New Zealand remains a committed bilateral partner, and we will continue to assist.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Malaysia.

Mr. Mohd. Radzi (Malaysia): It was not long ago that Timor-Leste gained its independence, with the assistance of the United Nations. With the continuing active involvement of the United Nations and the determination of its leaders and people, that young nation was acclaimed as a success story in United Nations peacebuilding and nation-building efforts. However, the recent eruption of violence and civil unrest has threatened to undo the painstaking efforts and sacrifices to bring progress and development to the people of that sovereign nation. We firmly believe that, through this body, the international community has an obligation to ensure that peace and stability continue to

prevail in Timor-Leste. Only then will that young nation be able to proceed with the implementation of its national development programmes to attain its development goals.

It was also with a similar sense of obligation that Malaysia, with its limited capacity, responded positively and promptly to the emergency request by the Government of Timor-Leste to assist in restoring law and order in that country. Currently, a complement of Malaysian police forces and 333 military personnel are being deployed. They are operating closely with the defence and security forces from Australia, New Zealand and Portugal.

It is quite heartening to hear from Mr. Martin and the Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste that the situation has improved and that signs of a return to normalcy are beginning to emerge. But let us not forget that the unexpected disturbances and civil disorder were actually a wake-up call that Timor-Leste is still in its fragile stages of nation-building and that the United Nations should stand ready to come to its assistance when needed.

Malaysia welcomes the decision of the Secretary-General to send Mr. Martin as a Special Envoy to Timor-Leste to assess the current situation and facilitate political dialogue. We call on the Security Council, in close consultation with Timor-Leste, to continue to conduct a thorough assessment of the underlying problems faced by Timor-Leste, including social and economic factors, in order to find long-lasting solutions. Let us not overlook such factors as poverty, unemployment and the lack or slow pace of economic development, among others. In essence, we feel that the Council, working closely with Timor-Leste, should examine all possible elements that could serve as impediments to peace and development and address them with the emplacement of a broad-based United Nations presence and engagement in sectors requiring United Nations assistance, including the security sector.

Given the fragility of the security situation in Timor-Leste and the need to rebuild the confidence of the people, especially in this period leading to their presidential and parliamentary elections, we strongly feel that it will be necessary for the Security Council to consider the placement of a full-fledged peacekeeping operation, as appropriate. The deployment of a peacekeeping operation, besides the immediate need of

a police force under the United Nations umbrella to sustain law and order, would be essential until the United Nations is confident that cohesive national police and defence forces have been fully re-established.

On the proposal for a rollover of the mandate of UNOTIL to allow for sufficient time to carefully and comprehensively assess the situation in Timor-Leste, my delegation agrees that a serious evaluation would be necessary on any proposal for extension. In that connection, we support the suggestion of Timor-Leste that a robust United Nations police, military and civilian mission is indispensable to assist the people of Timor-Leste to consolidate their hard-won peace and freedom. We stand ready to provide additional police contingents when the United Nations makes a decision in that direction.

My delegation is also concerned that more than 133,000 internally displaced persons are living at various locations in Dili and other areas throughout the country. Priority must be assigned to providing protection, food, water, sanitation, health care and shelter to those internally displaced persons before encouraging their return. We would like to commend the contributions that have been made and we call on the United Nations system to continue providing for the needs of those people.

Finally, we would also like to call on all parties in Timor-Leste to continue their political dialogue and engagement involving all relevant stakeholders, to settle their differences peacefully and to work towards national unity and reconciliation.

The President: I shall now give the floor to the members of the Council.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (spoke in Arabic): At the outset, I should like to welcome Mr. Ian Martin, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, and to thank him for his briefing this morning.

We also commend the efforts of the Secretary-General to find a peaceful solution to the situation in Timor-Leste in order to ensure lasting peace, security and national reconciliation there.

Events in Timor-Leste have accelerated and deteriorated in recent weeks. It is to be feared that this will lead to a humanitarian crisis in a situation that is already exacerbated by poverty. The information emerging from the camps to which people have fled

from the violence indicates that current conditions could lead to further tension, given the precarious circumstances there. We must act rapidly to respond to the humanitarian needs and to ensure the restoration of security and stability in Timor-Leste.

In that respect, my delegation welcomes the actions of the four friendly States amongst us who sent forces to Timor-Leste in order to restore peace, security and stability. Despite the strenuous efforts of those forces, acts of violence and vandalism continue in Dili. A return to stability requires the strengthening and combining of the efforts of the international community to halt the violence, to relaunch the process of national reconciliation and to overcome all differences.

The United Nations has played an important role in the young country of Timor-Leste in recent years. The Organization has invested much energy in achieving stability and supporting the young State. Given the United Nations achievements there and the need to prevent them from being undermined, it will be necessary for the international community, through joint action, especially in the Security Council, to give total support to an expanded United Nations presence on the ground and in military terms, as well as to accord the greatest attention to the proposal to be made by the Secretary-General concerning United Nations action in Timor-Leste. That will allow us to establish conditions conducive to the forthcoming elections.

Mr. Manongi (United Republic of Tanzania): Our statement will be circulated, so I should just like to make five points.

The first is to express deep regret at the recent negative developments in Timor-Leste.

The second is to commend the quick action taken by the Secretary-General not only in consulting leaders in the region and maintaining contacts with countries that had committed to sending forces to help restore stability, but also in deciding to send his Special Envoy. The Envoy's message that this was not a moment for despair, but a time for the people and leaders of Timor-Leste as well as the international community to act together, deserves our collective support.

Thirdly, we applaud Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand and Portugal for their response in sending forces to help in the restoration of order and stability,

as well as those who responded and continue to respond to the existing humanitarian challenges.

Fourthly, we appeal to the Timorese leadership to take urgent action to begin addressing the root causes of the conflict, including heeding the Secretary-General's message that any corrective measures must be pursued within the framework of the Constitution. We welcome the establishment of an independent commission of enquiry.

Lastly, the relapse of Timor-Leste is tragic. In hindsight, it can now be said that the Timor-Leste peacekeepers were pulled out too soon. We can, however, remedy that by supporting Timor-Leste while it heals its wounds and by helping the country to address the social and economic problems it faces. Timor-Leste needs an enhanced and extended United Nations presence. This Council can help make that possible. The United Republic of Tanzania will support such efforts.

Mr. Mayoral (Argentina) (spoke in Spanish): At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. Ian Martin for his briefing on the current situation in Timor-Leste. We believe that the appointment of Mr. Martin to carry out that most delicate mission was most appropriate, given his in-depth knowledge of the situation in Timor-Leste and his excellent relations with most of the Timorese leaders.

We also commend the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste on behalf of his Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Ramos-Horta. Through Ambassador Guterres, I should like once again to convey to the authorities in Dili the assurance that Argentina continues and will continue to support Timor-Leste in these difficult circumstances and that my country will take Timorese preferences duly into account when making a decision on a future presence of the United Nations.

Let us recall that for more than four years now, Timor-Leste has been a sovereign country. We call on the people and the leadership of the country to resolve all of the existing differences through peaceful means, in the framework of democratic processes, with full respect for human rights.

We believe that additional efforts should be made to achieve national reconciliation. Within that framework, it will be important to take account of the results of the current investigations into the

circumstances and the root causes of the recent acts of violence. We believe also that those responsible for such acts cannot go unpunished.

My country recalls vividly the terrible events of 1999 and believes that no effort should be spared in order to put an end to the cycle of violence. In that regard, Argentina recognizes and welcomes all the efforts made by Australia, Portugal, New Zealand and Malaysia through the timely deployment of military and police troops. We welcome the statements made by those delegations at this meeting.

We believe that the violence is not being perpetrated only by those persons who have been expelled from the armed forces. Other illegal bands and groups have exploited the situation in order to create chaos and confusion. As has been demonstrated, the proliferation of small arms in the country is an additional cause for concern.

The serious incidents that took place in Timor-Leste have compelled us to reassess the overly optimistic prognosis we made a few months ago. In particular, we believe that the Secretariat's assessment with regard to Timor-Leste's future need for United Nations assistance should be reviewed, so as to ensure the consolidation of the progress achieved in that country since its independence and prevent those gains from being reversed.

We believe that it is increasingly clear that the continued presence of international military and, above all, police troops will be essential in the months to come, in particular with respect to the general elections to be held in 2007.

We expect to receive as soon as possible specific recommendations from the Secretary-General as to the specific format and composition of such a presence. Nevertheless, we should not rule out a priori the possibility of including military and police components in the mandate of the mission that is to replace the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL).

On the basis of the recommendations of the Secretary-General, and taking into account the preferences of the Government of Timor-Leste, my delegation will actively participate in the negotiations to be held in forthcoming weeks in order to establish the new United Nations presence in that country. In the meantime, we believe that UNOTIL's mandate should

be accorded a technical extension until the Secretariat can work out the details of the new operation.

Likewise, we believe that the presence of international troops in the framework of current bilateral arrangements is necessary so as to maintain security in Timor-Leste until the new multilateral arrangements can be implemented.

Ms. Tincopa (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like at the outset to welcome Mr. Ian Martin, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, and to thank him for his briefing. We would like also to thank Ambassador Guterres for his briefing on behalf of Minister Ramos-Horta.

Peru regrets the violent incidents that have taken place in recent weeks in Timor-Leste related to the political and security situation in that country, which make clear the serious problems that the country is still facing. We would like to express our gratitude to all of the Timorese and international players that are seeking dialogue and reconciliation, with a view to restoring peace and security.

We welcome also the support of the four countries that provided security and defence forces in the framework of bilateral agreements, and we take note also of the statements they made today in the Council.

Likewise, we would also like to highlight the timely humanitarian assistance provided by some international organizations, including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and non-governmental organizations, to assist the civilian population and displaced persons. We believe that such assistance should continue.

Peru believes that the instability that Timor-Leste is experiencing requires international support. The United Nations cannot abandon Timor-Leste at a time when it is in such dire need of assistance. As we have pointed out in previous statements, we believe that Timor-Leste requires a compact whereby the United Nations, the friends and partners of Timor-Leste and the international community, including international financial institutions, would provide resources for the achievement of specific objectives that would ensure stability, development and security in that country.

To do so, it is important for the Government responsibly to present a political and development plan

agreed upon by all social actors which would include policies and actions aimed at ensuring good governance, as well as programmes related to the allocation of income obtained from oil and gas to development and to the fight against poverty. It is important for the Government to ensure that resources are distributed in such a manner that they benefit the neediest segments of the population. We believe that this is a crucial step on the path to a viable State that is sustainable in the long term.

We reiterate that the Security Council must do all it can in order to protect the investment that the United Nations has made in Timor-Leste. We support the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) for another month, but we believe that the United Nations office that will be established after UNOTIL must have a robust mandate that is focused on strengthening democracy, building the capacity of national mechanisms for the promotion and protection of human rights, and providing the necessary assistance in the area of security and support for the elections. The success of the 2007 elections will be a decisive step for peacebuilding and democracy in Timor-Leste.

Likewise, Peru calls on the Timorese leaders to act responsibly, through dialogue and confidence-building. We deem it important to investigate the causes of the violent incidents that took place in Dili and in other towns and that action be taken in that respect. We also deem it important that the task of implementing the recommendations of the Commission on Reception, Truth and Reconciliation should continue, in particular with respect to acknowledging the victims and denying impunity to those responsible for human rights violations.

Mr. Christian (Ghana): Madam President, I wish to commend you for having convened this meeting and also to take this opportunity to express to the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ian Martin, my delegation's appreciation of his briefing on the crisis in Timor-Leste. We have taken note of the updates and assessments made by the representatives of Australia, Portugal, New Zealand and Malaysia — the countries that are currently leading the international effort to restore normalcy to Timor-Leste. My delegation joins others in thanking them for their initiatives, which deserve our encouragement and support.

In that regard, we also welcome the proposal to establish a United Nations force in Timor-Leste. Hopefully, the people of Timor-Leste will quickly put the unfortunate events of the past few weeks behind them and reunite behind their leaders in building a united and prosperous nation. We appeal to those still bent on fomenting trouble to realize that a sharply polarized, unstable and impoverished country is ultimately not in anyone's best interest. They must therefore lay down their arms and revert to frank and open dialogue in order to address the root causes of the problems of Timor-Leste.

Venting frustration through violence can only aggravate the woes of the deprived and make life more miserable and insecure for the population. Indeed, the grim spectacle of tens of thousands of displaced persons sheltering in makeshift camps and dependent on relief is a step backwards from the optimism that had, until recently, greeted the steady transition of Timor-Leste into a viable State.

These setbacks notwithstanding, the international community can help the people of Timor-Leste step back from the dangerous course they have taken lately. My delegation believes that restoring law and order is an immediate challenge and an utmost priority in these circumstances. We also support the call for urgent humanitarian relief for the displaced persons. At the same time, there is no question but that lasting peace and stability can be achieved in Timor-Leste only when the country's long-term development is addressed with a high sense of urgency. While the carefully designed programme of institutional development and capacity-building must be vigorously implemented as the building blocks of a modern State, the fact remains that meeting the basic needs of the people is what will make each citizen live at peace with himself or herself and with his or her neighbour. That, in turn, requires that Timor-Leste be given a genuine economic space to develop, which must also take into account the need to harness and manage the country's resources in a manner that would benefit future generations.

Mr. Oshima (Japan): Madame President, the Japanese delegation appreciates your convening this important meeting today on Timor-Leste — a young country struggling on its way to building a promising nation and now suddenly finding itself in turmoil. I thank Mr. Ian Martin for his briefing on the latest situation, based on his active engagement on the ground with the leaders of Timor-Leste. I also thank

the representatives of the four countries that have deployed stabilization forces to Timor-Leste at the urgent request of the Timor-Leste Government for their statements.

We had hoped to have the presence of the Foreign and Defence Minister, Mr. José Ramos Horta, at this meeting today. However, we all understand how difficult it would be for him to leave his country at this critical time. My Government sent a strong message to him and the other leaders of the Government of Timor-Leste of Japan's continued strong support of them.

I also would like to take the opportunity to commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, and his team on the ground for their tireless efforts, in particular for Mr. Hasegawa's visits to many parts of the country with a view to contributing to the progress of political reconciliation.

Many in the United Nations and outside it have believed and remarked that Timor-Leste is a proud success story in the history of United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations — a model of international peace and development cooperation in which the United Nations and the rest of the international community worked together with the people of a territory to help them move from conflict to making a successful transition to peace and nation-building.

Throughout the period of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNMIST) and the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL), the people in that land, guided by their distinguished leaders, have demonstrated remarkable resilience and a sense of ownership, and have made steady strides towards sustainable development. Other important actors, such as bilateral and multilateral partners, joined forces to provide indispensable supplementary assistance. Based on achievements in the areas of public safety and order and reassuring progress in the building of State institutions, our collective judgment in the Council, until recently, favoured bringing the engagement of the United Nations, through UNOTIL, to a careful but gradual close.

However, the events and disturbances we have seen in the past few weeks in Dili and the rest of the country have revealed the fragility of the present

situation. Moreover, it is regrettable that the current disorder was invited and worsened, in no small part, by political conflicts among the leadership of Timor-Leste.

In the aftermath of the turmoil, the most urgent necessity has been the restoration of law and order in society. Japan commends the quick action of the four countries — Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand and Portugal — in dispatching their troops and police forces in response to the request of the Timor-Leste Government, in order to stabilize the security situation. That response by the four countries was not only welcome but demonstrated, we believe, a level of maturity in the commitment by countries with interests in the region to addressing the question of peace and welfare in the region as a whole.

At the same time, it is clear that resolving the problems now faced by the Timorese must go beyond immediately restoring public order and will have to entail measures that address the underlying causes of today's problem in Timor-Leste. In this regard, it is important, first and foremost, that internal political reconciliation be achieved through ownership by the Timorese themselves. We believe that the United Nations could play a useful role in facilitating this process, but the process should be led and owned by the Timorese, and not by the United Nations. It is our hope that all the political leaders of Timor-Leste will recognize their responsibility and strive to create a constructive and forward-looking relationship among themselves, putting unity and the best interest of the country above all.

With regard to the request from the Government of Timor-Leste concerning the establishment of an independent inquiry commission regarding the violent incidents in April and May, the possible involvement of the United Nations and the manner and extent of that involvement in such a process should be carefully considered, taking into account, *inter alia*, the points I have just mentioned.

I also would like to mention the humanitarian crisis in the country, in which more than ten thousand people have been internally displaced and forced to live in dire conditions. To alleviate their situation, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) launched a flash appeal requesting \$18.9 million yesterday. My Government has decided to contribute \$5 million in response to that appeal. We

call for a similarly quick and positive response from other Member States.

In parallel with the political solution, we should also look again at the underlying economic and social problems faced by the Timorese that contribute to fragility in their society and create causes for unrest. Here, there are more lessons to be learned. Not least is the acute problem of youth unemployment, which has come under the spotlight. Efforts to alleviate these social problems, including expanding employment, may not be within the direct province of the Security Council. Nevertheless, discussion on this issue cannot be avoided because it has an impact on the outcome of the United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities in Timor-Leste, as indeed is the case in other instances of peacebuilding elsewhere in the world where the United Nations is involved. Although the international community has continuously provided its support for the reconstruction and development of Timor-Leste through bilateral and multilateral channels, in our view this issue has not been addressed sufficiently.

It is now important to effectively and efficiently utilize these international assistance resources and seek to comprehensively address the country's social problems, in full respect, once again, of the concept of ownership by Timor-Leste. The country's leadership should focus on the root of the problems and ensure appropriate distribution of resources. The significant potential revenue from natural resources development in the Timor Sea should be managed prudently and in a transparent manner for the most efficient use of those resources and for the greatest benefit to the Timorese people.

We consider that Timor-Leste could be considered as a case for study in the Peacebuilding Commission at an early appropriate time.

The shape of post-UNOTIL United Nations engagement should be considered in the light of those aforementioned points. The international community now needs to draw a lesson from this recent series of incidents, conduct a review of the past United Nations activities and consider ways to enhance the Organization's role in Timor-Leste with urgency but with a certain degree of caution. In order to allow such a review and planning for post-UNOTIL engagement, we support the proposal of the Secretary-General to

once again roll over the mandate of UNOTIL for an appropriate period of time.

Japan will consult with other members of the Council, members of the core group on Timor-Leste and other major stakeholders on a draft resolution for the rollover. We also expect that the Secretary-General will, reasonably soon, present recommendations to the Council for its consideration on the follow-on mission, based on the assessments of the field mission led by Mr. Hasegawa and his team and the Special Envoy, Mr. Ian Martin. We look forward to the timely issuance of his report on that subject.

Finally, Japan has provided significant support to Timor-Leste for the past seven years, since the start of United Nations involvement in that country in all its phases. That has included the dispatch of an engineering battalion of our Self-Defence Forces, as well as police advisers and civilian experts for capacity-building. We also support a number of assistance projects and programmes at the Government and community levels. We will continue to work closely with the Government of Timor-Leste and in close consultation with the core group, multilateral institutions, non-governmental organizations and other key actors in the region and beyond.

Mr. Dolgov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Mr. Ian Martin, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, for his detailed briefing on the situation in Timor-Leste and for the efforts undertaken to normalize it. We also heard with great interest the statement of Mr. Ramos-Horta, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence of Timor-Leste.

The Russian Federation is concerned about the continuing serious crisis in Timor-Leste. The situation there remains very complex and unstable. Of particular concern are the increasing tension among ethnic groups in Timorese society and the increase in internal political conflict. However, we cannot fail to note the positive effect of the prompt deployment — at the request of Timor-Leste's leaders — of international military and police forces from Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand and Portugal and of United Nations efforts to help resolve the crisis.

We greatly appreciate the activities of the Secretary-General, his Special Envoy, Mr. Ian Martin; the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa; and all the staff of the United

Nations Office in Timor-Leste. Of course, there is still much work ahead of them.

The crisis in Timor-Leste has clearly shown how weak and unstable that country's major State institutions remain, against a background of major social and economic problems. It is essential that the parameters and modalities for a future United Nations presence in Timor-Leste be commensurate with the country's needs. We expect the Secretary-General to make specific recommendations in that regard. We hope that they will take into account the lessons of this crisis and the wishes of Timor-Leste's leaders.

Mr. Li Junhua (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation would like to thank Mr. Ian Martin, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, for his briefing on the most recent developments in Timor-Leste. We also express our appreciation for the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste on behalf of the country's Minister for Foreign Affairs. In addition, the Chinese delegation would like to thank the representatives of Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand and Portugal for their briefings on the activities of the military and police forces of their respective countries. At a time of turbulence in Timor-Leste, those four countries, at the request of the Government of Timor-Leste, sent in military and police forces whose swift deployment has played an important role in helping to restore stability and order on the ground. We express our appreciation to them for their efforts. I also take this opportunity to pay tribute to all the staff of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste for their continuous work in difficult circumstances.

For more than six years, Timor-Leste has been a success story and a source of pride among United Nations operations. However, the continuous turmoil of the past six weeks has been a source of concern for the international community. People are asking: has the United Nations success story in Timor-Leste gone with the wind? Will the international community's investment in Timor-Leste go down the drain?

I recall that a representative of the Chinese delegation, speaking here in this Chamber (see S/PV.5132, p. 21), compared Timor-Leste, the youngest, least developed country in Asia, to a toddler; although it has taken its encouraging first step, it may still fall. Unfortunately, Timor-Leste took a fall with the recurrence of instability. What we should do, rather than lament and sigh, is to help Timor-Leste stand up

again as soon as possible, heal its wounds and return to the path of steady and healthy development.

To that end, China wishes to make the following observations.

First, all political forces in Timor-Leste should base themselves on the overall interests of national stability and security, set aside previous differences and disputes, seek common understanding and reconciliation, resolve their problems within the constitutional and democratic framework and renew the people's hope and confidence in the future of their country.

Secondly, the international community should continue to provide Timor-Leste with multifaceted assistance at this very difficult time in order to help the Government and the people restore normality at an early date. At the same time, it is essential to be fully aware of the sensitivity and fragility of the situation in the country, to act strictly within the limits of propriety, to maintain a fine balance and to avoid becoming involved in Timor-Leste's internal problems and ethnic disputes or, worse still, imposing one's own views and demands.

Thirdly, the United Nations should carefully study the causes of the resurgence of conflict in Timor-Leste, undertake targeted measures to resolve the problems thus revealed and make appropriate plans and preparations for the United Nations presence in Timor-Leste, taking fully into account the views of the Government of Timor-Leste. We look forward to the observations and recommendations of the Secretary-General in that regard.

Finally, because the situation in Timor-Leste is not yet fully stable, and so that the Secretariat has sufficient time to carefully plan and prepare for the next step, China agrees to another technical rollover of the mandate of UNOTIL.

There is an old Chinese saying to the effect that a misfortune may be a blessing in disguise. While Timor-Leste has suffered a temporary setback, we believe that, if its Government, its people, the international community and the United Nations all learn lessons from that setback, seriously and objectively study and address the root causes of the problem and become wiser as a result, then Timor-Leste will not have taken this fall in vain, the enormous investment made by the international community will not be lost and the United

Nations will surely write a new chapter in the success story of Timor-Leste.

Ms. Wolcott Sanders (United States of America): We thank Special Envoy Ian Martin for his excellent report on the situation in East Timor and the Permanent Representative of East Timor for his detailed presentation from Foreign Minister Ramos-Horta. We also thank the representatives of Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand and Portugal for their reports, and we commend their forces on the ground for their efforts to consolidate peace and stability in East Timor. We are pleased that coordination among the international forces in Dili continues to improve and that their collective efforts have led to a substantial reduction in the level of violence in Dili. Finally, thanks are due to Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for the job that he and his colleagues in the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) continue to do in East Timor, and to Special Envoy Ian Martin for his productive efforts in the past few weeks.

We recognize that, even when the violence is quelled and the situation is brought fully under the control of the central Government, formidable challenges will remain for East Timor.

Under the current circumstances, the mandate of UNOTIL should not be allowed to expire on 20 June. But given that it was not structured to deal with the current unrest, we believe that it should be extended only for another 30 days, until 20 July, to give the Security Council time to work out the structure of the United Nations follow-on mission.

Because resolving the current crisis will require sound, credible information regarding its causes, and because of the urgent need to investigate the deaths that took place in Dili on 28 and 29 April and from 23 to 25 May, we concur with the Government of East Timor's request that the United Nations conduct an independent inquiry into those matters and believe that the resolution extending UNOTIL's mandate should include provisions for it to commence immediately. While the details of such a follow-on mission will be the subject of much discussion in the coming weeks, one thing is already clear: the disintegration of the Timorese national police during the crisis stemmed directly from its politicization and the lack of a central doctrine and training plan. The police will need to be retrained from the beginning, with one country

assuming that responsibility so that training will be the same across all ranks and units. In addition, Chapter VII authority may be necessary for the international community to provide the robust assistance needed to help East Timor overcome the current crisis.

The recommendations of the United Nations electoral needs assessment mission for East Timor illustrate how the United Nations can be most helpful. In order to ensure that East Timor's democratic development continues smoothly, we believe that the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division should, in cooperation with the Government of East Timor, organize and administer the upcoming national elections. We also continue to strongly support credible accountability for the crimes against humanity committed in East Timor in 1999.

We deplore the pilfering of the files of the Serious Crimes Unit during the current unrest and call on the Government of East Timor to assist in safeguarding that vital evidence. We also strongly urge that copies of the Unit's files be promptly sent to the United Nations, as directed in the resolution establishing UNOTIL's mandate (resolution 1599 (2005)). We look forward to further progress by the bilateral Truth and Friendship Commission and are hopeful that it will pursue a credible process that is transparent, identifies the names of perpetrators, protects witness confidentiality and involves the international community.

Mr. Gayama (Congo) (*spoke in French*): This year, Timor-Leste, a State in which the United Nations is particularly invested, should be celebrating the fourth year of its independence in peace and harmony.

The assistance provided by the United Nations since 1999 — through, successively, the United Nations Mission in East Timor; the International Force, East Timor; the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor; the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor; and the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste, established in 2005 — made it possible for the young republic to move steadfastly towards the establishment of a State based on the rule of law and to lay the foundations for sustainable development.

Indeed, thanks to the United Nations, East Timor now has a constitution and a national development plan, and it has embarked on an institutional capacity-building process. Unfortunately, against that promising

backdrop, destabilizing events took place in April and May, centred on Dili, the repercussions of which are continuing. My delegation condemns those acts of violence — perpetrated one year after the departure of United Nations troops and in the lead-up to elections — which are putting the nation in jeopardy and endangering the lives of the Timorese people, and which threaten to dash the hopes of the international community as a whole. We therefore encourage the international community to continue to assist in efforts to return the situation in Timor-Leste to normal.

The Security Council took steps to deal with the dangers threatening the budding democracy by issuing, on 25 May, a presidential statement (S/PRST/2006/25) that supported, in particular, the request for assistance made by the Timorese Government. The Congo welcomes the prompt response of Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand and Portugal — the States that were called upon — whose dispatch of troops prevented the deterioration of the situation and large-scale humanitarian disaster.

Wisely, the Secretary-General promptly sent his Special Envoy, Mr. Ian Martin, whose briefing to the Council today will prove to be of great assistance to us in our decision-making.

In the light of the recent developments in the country, the proposals made by the Secretary-General in his report contained in document S/2006/251 can be usefully placed on the agenda again, especially those relating to a commission of inquiry and, more generally, to the involvement of the United Nations in the envisaged security sector reform and in the provision of support for institutions and for efforts aimed at national reconciliation.

In conclusion, my delegation supports all of the efforts to restore stability and peace in Timor-Leste. We call on the Timorese parties to ensure calm. We note the efforts aimed at reconciliation already made by the Timorese authorities, religious leaders, security forces and all those in the country and in the region who are able to guarantee respect for the electoral deadlines and ultimately promote the triumph of legality and the rule of law.

Mr. Duclos (France) (*spoke in French*): I will be brief, because many of my colleagues have already said what I wanted to say. I align myself with the statement to be made later by the Permanent

Representative of Austria on behalf of the European Union.

What happens in Timor-Leste affects us here in the Council in a special way. We have therefore followed the events of recent weeks with a great deal of apprehension, as well as with sympathy. I would like to ask the representative of Timor-Leste to convey that message to his Prime Minister, José Ramos-Horta, in response to the message that he conveyed to us today.

What immediate lessons can be learned from the events of recent weeks, and what can we do? I would like to draw three preliminary lessons.

First, the United Nations must not withdraw too soon or prematurely from a situation in which it is clearly playing a pivotal role. That is clear.

Secondly — to go a little further — when the United Nations withdraws from such a situation, that has consequences in terms of the balance among local actors, as well as repercussions for the interest manifested by international donors. Thus, a poorly planned withdrawal is indeed a withdrawal that could have negative repercussions on the ground and that could discourage donors. I believe that all of us in the Council are looking for an exit strategy; our work in that regard should include an analysis of the impact of our withdrawal.

The third lesson that I think we should bear in mind is one that could do much to bring about a departure from our normal practices. We note that, in the case of Timor-Leste, we possessed no in-depth analysis of the country's political problems. Here, I thank Mr. Ian Martin for his briefing; I was unable to be here to listen to it, but I read the text very carefully. It shows the extent to which we underestimated the political rifts in Timor-Leste society. Those rifts became apparent in a particular situation related to the police and the armed forces. This gives us food for thought. Aristotle observed that man was a political animal, and we should not think that we can solve political problems by increasing humanitarian and development assistance and by providing security from outside the country. We must tackle the political problems.

What, then, are we to do? It is now clear that the United Nations will be re-engaging in Timor-Leste, and we are all determined to do so. As to the modalities, everyone understands that we must take some time to

reflect in order to formulate them. That time for reflection will actually be a period of intensive action; we expect, in particular, that the Secretariat will continue the assessment that Ian Martin began and, above all, will pursue its contacts with all the authorities concerned. The Secretariat should propose to the Council one or several options that have been carefully tested vis-à-vis our Timorese partners.

My next comment relates to the message we must send at this stage of the crisis. There has been a great deal of talk about the success of the United Nations in Timor-Leste; I myself always had doubts about this, because the time period had been quite short and it was therefore premature to speak of success. Let us recall Zhou Enlai's comment about the impact of the French revolution: "It is too soon to say". That is all the more true of a country that is only four years old. Hence, it was too soon to speak of a success. But let me add that it is far, far too soon to speak of a failure.

The message we must send to the entire world is that it was not abnormal for a newly independent Timor-Leste to encounter difficulties; that is in the natural order of things. The important thing is for Timor-Leste to show a determination to take the measures necessary to return to the path of progress and State-building. Also important, as the Secretary-General and Ian Martin have both said, is that the international community be mobilized as manifested in the immediate action by the four countries that have provided forces, and that the United Nations remain mobilized and remain by the side of Timor-Leste. The Organization must be entirely determined to do its share to help Timor-Leste.

Mr. Matulay (Slovakia): First of all, Madam President, I wish to express my appreciation to you for convening this timely public meeting on Timor-Leste, as the Council is currently considering the best available options to address the situation in the country and the problems underlying it. We listened with great interest to the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ian Martin, and we thank him for his assessment and his observations. My delegation also welcomes the diplomatic efforts of the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Timor-Leste, Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, which are aimed at helping the country out of its current political and humanitarian crisis.

The Permanent Representative of Austria will shortly make a statement on behalf of the European

Union, and Slovakia fully associates itself with that statement. I will thus limit myself to the following additional remarks.

The United Nations has sought to create a viable nation-State in Timor-Leste since the original United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) was set up in 1999 following the country's vote for independence.

After many years of suffering, the country was just beginning to show signs of progress and was portrayed as a success story for United Nations peacekeeping and humanitarian activities. Now, in recent weeks, ethnic and regional grievances and political rifts have been unravelling much of that effort. Foreign troops returned to Timor-Leste last month as the worst violence since the formal independence four years ago threatened to tip Asia's youngest nation into chaos, resulting in numerous deaths and thousands of internally displaced persons.

My Government is very concerned over the deteriorating situation in Timor-Leste and the resulting casualties. We call on all sides in Timor-Leste to act in the interests of the Timorese people, the region and the international community. We call upon the Government to undertake intense efforts to surmount the political and institutional problems, to rectify the underlying defects and to ensure the protection of civilians, in cooperation with the United Nations and international troops.

The peacekeepers are gradually restoring order in the capital, Dili, consistent with the arrangements already in place between the Government of Timor-Leste and the Governments of Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand and Portugal, whose troops and police have been deployed to help restore security there. When the immediate crisis is over, the Timorese leadership still has to face the problems that underlie the situation. The challenges that remain are formidable, but the Government and the people of Timor-Leste must never be deflected from their efforts to move towards full-fledged democracy and sustainable economic and social development.

Timor-Leste's combination of weak governance, continuing grinding poverty and a fragile democracy means that it will struggle to function on its own for years to come. With the upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections in 2007, the country is rapidly approaching yet another crucial crossroads in its

history. The elections will be of utmost importance for Timor-Leste's future stability and democratic development and must be conducted through procedures that are fair.

We are therefore convinced of the continuing need for strong United Nations involvement in consolidating peace and democracy in Timor-Leste before the country can function independently. My delegation is ready to engage constructively in the deliberations that will take place in the Security Council on the conditions and design of the future United Nations mission in Timor-Leste.

Mr. Vassilakis (Greece): I too would like to thank Mr. Ian Martin, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, for his briefing on the latest developments in Timor-Leste. I would also like to thank the Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste for his presentation.

Greece fully aligns itself with the statement to be made shortly by the Permanent Representative of Austria on behalf of the European Union. Allow me to make some remarks in addition to that.

The Greek Government deplores the unfortunate violent incidents, and expresses its deep condolences to the Government and the people of Timor-Leste on the loss of so many lives and the enormous destruction of property. We regret that such a short period of time was enough to overturn the successes and gains of the past four years. This clear manifestation of the fragility of the East Timorese political, security and social situation is more than worrisome, and it deserves the full attention of the Security Council.

At the same time we have learned the lesson that even though we ought to be saving money, the withdrawal of United Nations forces should take place in a more cautious way.

We commend the immediate dispatch and deployment of defence and police forces by Portugal, Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia in response to the request of the President and Government of Timor-Leste. Furthermore, we are very pleased to see all the efforts undertaken by the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL), especially with regard to easing the humanitarian crisis. On the other hand, we regret that UNOTIL's mandate is coming to an end under such dire circumstances.

There is no doubt that Timor-Leste needs a new reinforced United Nations mission so that the defence,

security and justice institutions can regain their functional capacity and so that the East Timorese people can be guaranteed a safe and peaceful everyday life. It is also important that all those who committed the recent crimes and abuses be brought to justice.

Greece has paid particular attention to the assessment of the situation presented today by Mr. Martin. We also give positive consideration to the views of the Government of Timor-Leste, especially in the context of the preparations for, and holding of, presidential and parliamentary elections next year.

In the current circumstances, the main task of the Security Council is to safeguard the viability of Timor-Leste's democratic institutions. Greece looks forward to working with the other members of the Council to achieve consensus in formulating the most appropriate draft resolution concerning the United Nations mission that will succeed UNOTIL. We also look forward to the specific recommendations of the Secretary-General.

In conclusion, we hope that political reconciliation and the disarmament of all illegal groups can be achieved in the near future, paving the way for the resumption of efforts to rebuild this young nation and put much-needed development projects back on track.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): At the outset, I would like to align myself with the statement to be made shortly by the representative of Austria on behalf of the European Union. I would also like to join colleagues who have already spoken in thanking Ian Martin for his assessment of the situation in Timor-Leste, to thank him for his efforts there in recent weeks and, incidentally, to thank him for the terrific job he was doing in Nepal before he set off to East Timor. I hope he gets back to Nepal quite soon. I would also like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for his continuing work in Timor-Leste.

We heard this morning from the four countries that responded so quickly to the request from the Government of East Timor for assistance. The stabilization achieved by that arrangement argues very much for supporting the status quo. The Government of East Timor requested that assistance, and the Security Council provided cover in a presidential statement. We want that to continue. We look to the four countries to coordinate with the Government of East Timor and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General so that

they have maximum impact on the ground in Timor-Leste.

It is obvious that the United Nations needs to do more, on a sustainable basis, in Timor-Leste. It will be important that all parties work together to achieve the best outcome for this fledgling country — as the Secretary-General has put it, this child of the international community — and to meet the challenges of preparing for the elections in 2007.

Frankly, we must be prepared to do whatever it takes to take us through to the logical state. That state is one where there is stability, political progress and development in the economy, and where security has been attained. It is going to be a challenge to keep that process on track, bearing in mind that elections are not an end in themselves. What we need is for elections to lead to a sustainable political situation. That means that much more needs to be done now, and through the time of the elections, in the areas of governance, the rule of law and institutional capacity-building. That does not happen overnight. Following this briefing, the Security Council must consider how to respond. We should decide carefully and quickly what we are going to do.

The United Kingdom supports a 30-day extension for the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste. That would allow time for further discussion. But I fear that any further delay in establishing a follow-on mission would risk losing the current impetus and jeopardize the reputation of the United Nations in Timor-Leste, and thus our collective ability to work effectively in the country.

It seems to us that a United Nations policing and political mission would be a solution. But, in the meantime, the messages of calm and support should continue. The Secretary-General's radio initiative is very welcome. We need more of that. We also need an urgent mission to assess exactly what is required. If it can produce, for all of us, a list of what is needed, then individual countries may be able to bring forward more offers of bilateral assistance, which the United Nations can then coordinate. I think that the example set by Japan is one that we should all seek to emulate.

We look forward to the recommendations that the Secretary-General will make. It seems to us that, one way or another, the United Nations will have to be involved in the process of investigating what exactly caused the problems in recent months.

More generally, what Timor-Leste demonstrates is the difficulty of peacebuilding as a subject. Trying to develop stability in a post-conflict situation is inherently difficult. But it reminds us all of the responsibility of the United Nations across the board to do more to build peace in post-conflict situations, to allow sufficient time for the involvement of the United Nations and to make sure that we have covered enough of the key elements so that peace can actually be sustained. That is what the Peacebuilding Commission is all about. But this is an exemplar to all of us of why we have to do better.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Denmark.

Denmark fully associates itself with the statement to be made shortly by the representative of Austria on behalf of the European Union. I will only add a few points.

Denmark would like to pay tribute to the four States that so rapidly heeded Timor-Leste's call for assistance in restoring security to the country. We are grateful for their efforts, which have already contributed to calming the situation. Nevertheless, the security situation remains tense, and additional United Nations assistance will be required to help reorganize and rebuild Timor-Leste's security sector.

We welcome the efforts made by the Government of Timor-Leste to clarify responsibilities within the Government and to reach out to the dismissed soldiers in order to find a solution to the crisis. Political reconciliation is key to resolving the conflict, and we support the United Nations continued engagement in that effort. Denmark also fully supports the request for an independent investigation of recent events and calls for those responsible for the killings to be brought to justice.

We thank the representative of Timor-Leste and the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for their remarks here today on the future United Nations presence in Timor-Leste. We look forward to receiving more detailed proposals from Timor-Leste and the Secretary-General as soon as they become available. In the meantime, Denmark supports a relatively short extension of the present mandate of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste.

Among other elements, a future United Nations mission would need to contain a robust policing and

police-training element, assistance to the upcoming elections, and support for justice and reconciliation. On the latter issue, Denmark understands that the Secretary-General will soon issue a separate report. It will also be important that the humanitarian needs arising from the conflict, as well as the serious socio-economic problems that have been a contributing factor to the recent conflict, be rapidly addressed.

Recent events are a strong indication that the international community needs to continue to provide strong support to Timor-Leste. With the combination of international support and the efforts of Timor-Leste's Government and people, Timor-Leste will, hopefully, soon be back on track towards a more peaceful and prosperous future.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mr. Sardenberg (Brazil): I would like to thank the Danish presidency, under your leadership, Madam, for convening this timely public meeting to deal with the situation in Timor-Leste, which has become increasingly distressing since the last meeting of the Security Council on this item.

I wish to extend thanks to Ambassador José Luis Guterres of Timor-Leste, whose statement before this Council underlined the sense of urgency that should guide the coming actions of the United Nations in that country. Through you, Madam, I would convey to him and to all Timorese the heartfelt condolences of Brazil for the lives lost in recent events.

I wish also to express my appreciation for the briefing given by Special Envoy Ian Martin on his mission to Timor-Leste and his insightful update of the situation.

Ever since this Council held a public meeting on Timor-Leste last May, the serious deterioration of conditions on the ground have confirmed the gloomier assessments of the country. In fact, institutions have proven fragile and violent political disagreement has emerged.

Brazil joins previous speakers in welcoming the prompt response of Portugal, New Zealand, Australia and Malaysia to the request for assistance formulated by the Government of Timor-Leste. Having said that, I would state that we remain deeply distraught by reports

of recurring acts of banditry and other forms of violence. At this juncture, it seems essential for the Timorese to strive to make the foundations of political and legal institutions strong enough to allow different groups to express their opinions and to advance their claims without resorting to violence. In doing so, they will be acting in accordance with their courageous and relentless efforts to become independent and build a better country for themselves.

Last May, I closed my statement by emphasizing that piecemeal solutions are neither positive nor viable, and I added that

"[i]n our view, the Security Council must at this time deliver a strong, unequivocal message of support for Timor-Leste" (S/PV.5432, p. 30).

That is becoming increasingly true. The United Nations and its Member States must act in a manner that reassures Timor-Leste of their commitment and assist that country with the necessary means to overcome the present situation.

A stronger United Nations presence should be carefully planned and implemented in order to help restore stability and allow the political forces in the country to solve their differences in a peaceful manner. The Council should continue to work closely with the Government. It should also discuss with the four countries ways and means of strengthening cooperation on the ground. In due course, all security contributions should be placed under the United Nations umbrella, with proper mechanisms of command and control and accountability.

As a member of the core group and a sister Portuguese-speaking country, we look forward to hearing concrete proposals on the best format for the United Nations presence. At this point, a full-fledged peacekeeping operation, with a major police component and a broad nation-building capacity, appears to be an appropriate response, in line with the request made by the Timorese President, Prime Minister and Speaker of Parliament in their letter dated 11 June.

At this point, the Council should give priority to restoring security. The 2007 elections should serve as a time reference for positive domestic and international action. A proactive United Nations engagement is also needed in addressing underlying elements of the present crisis. Beyond security, other relevant areas

certainly include helping to strengthen the rule of law, assisting in humanitarian relief, extending cooperation for development, addressing issues related to human rights, promoting institution-building through institutional support, and capacity-building within the context of preparations for the coming elections in 2007. Within such a framework, we would welcome the creation of mechanisms that could bring to justice the perpetrators of the unlawful acts that have claimed innocent lives in May and June.

The United Nations Office in Timor-Leste has played its role in Timor-Leste. A technical rollover resolution should serve only to prepare for a new stage in international efforts. The Council should not delay too long the decision to reassess the United Nations presence.

I should like to reiterate the commitment of Brazil to Timor-Leste. We will persist in our efforts, both bilateral and multilateral, to help the people and the Government of Timor-Leste to find peace, stability and development, as stressed yesterday by President Lula da Silva in a letter to President Xanana Gusmão. At this time, I would emphasize that this Council, this Organization and its Member States should not only send a strong message of support for Timor-Leste, but also take the requisite measures to make it real.

The President I call on the representative of Austria.

Mr. Pfanzelter (Austria): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and the countries aligning themselves with this statement.

Just one month after the last public meeting on Timor-Leste, we are meeting again today following the serious incidents that have occurred in recent weeks. We listened carefully to the remarks made by Ambassador José Luis Guterres and Mr. Ian Martin, the Secretary-General's Special Envoy, and we would like to thank them for their frank assessments of the situation.

The European Union is very concerned about the security situation in Timor-Leste. There can be no doubt that the escalation of events in the past two months has created a highly volatile security situation that endangers the achievements that Timor-Leste has registered in the years since gaining independence. The European Union calls on all parties involved to refrain from further violence and to contribute to re-

establishing public order. The European Union also calls on relevant actors from all sides to engage in dialogue to find a solution to the current crisis and its underlying problems.

We applaud the leadership of Timor-Leste for its decision to ask for help in trying to contain the situation. The European Union commends the countries that were asked for help — Portugal, Australia, Malaysia and New Zealand — for their quick reaction to that appeal and for their commitment to helping to restore law and order and to supporting Timor-Leste in this difficult phase.

Events in the last two months have, unfortunately, revealed a serious political crisis and shortcomings in the approach to security-sector reform in Timor-Leste, leading to the recent riots. Now, following the confrontation between different parts of the security sector and the looting of equipment, including weapons, a lot more work will need to be done. Most importantly, of course, the issues and grievances that led to the current situation will have to be addressed in a comprehensive manner so that political reconciliation can take place, as a necessary precondition for continuing the process of nation-building and for the holding of the 2007 elections. At the same time, we should not forget that there are sectors of the administration in Timor-Leste that had successfully taken up the provision of State services prior to the recent riots and whose functioning has been interrupted. Those parts of the administration must be enabled to take up their vital functions once again.

At a time when the mandate of the current United Nations operation — the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) — is under scrutiny and up for renewal, it is necessary to examine the future role of the United Nations in Timor-Leste. It is clear to the European Union that an international security presence will have to remain in the country for some time to provide security and stability. The role of the United Nations will have to be strong in order to promote and facilitate the process of political reconciliation so as to heal the divisions that have become apparent, to uphold law and order, and to redouble international efforts in capacity-building for the administration in Timor-Leste.

In the light of recent events, the holding of the 2007 presidential and parliamentary elections is a formidable challenge. International support for the

election process will be crucial for its success and, indeed, for the consolidation of democracy in the country. The wishes of the Government of Timor-Leste and the assessment of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy should be among the guiding principles in considering the form that the future United Nations mission might take and will have to be closely taken into account. In that regard, it is important that the United Nations and the international community at large be enabled to finish the work undertaken.

Since 1999, the European Union and its member States have been reliable development partners for Timor-Leste. Under the current circumstances, the continued support of the international community is — more than ever before — essential for the long-term economic development of the country. In that regard, last Friday an agreement was signed between the European Commission and the Government allotting €18 million to economic and democratic development projects in the near future. A further €63 million in financial aid has been earmarked for the period 2008 to 2013. We are thus continuing to honour our commitment to help Timor-Leste in this field. The European Union is also engaged in the field of humanitarian assistance, with the European Commission redirecting ongoing humanitarian programmes and preparing a funding decision to swiftly address the emergency needs of the more than 100,000 internally displaced persons in and around Dili. Furthermore, the Commission is ready to consider stabilization measures under its Rapid Reaction Mechanism.

Timor-Leste is going through a difficult period. The United Nations was instrumental in helping the people of Timor-Leste gain their independence and start building their nation. We must do everything in our power to secure that investment and to strengthen the fragile democracy in Timor-Leste. The United Nations must heed its call for help and assistance in times of crisis.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of the Philippines, on whom I now call.

Mr. Mercado (Philippines): My delegation thanks the Danish presidency for having convened this public meeting on Timor-Leste. This meeting could not be more timely or important, particularly as the assistance of the international community to Timor-Leste, on both a bilateral and a multilateral basis, is

becoming more critical than ever due to the unfortunate events of the past two months. We also thank Special Envoy Ian Martin and Ambassador José Luis Guterres for their candid reports.

We join other delegations in expressing our deep concern at recent developments in Timor-Leste. We support the efforts being undertaken by the Government of the country to end the violence and to restore security and stability in the country. We welcome in particular the plan to hold an all-inclusive dialogue and the creation of a special inquiry commission to determine responsibility for the violence. At the same time, we commend Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand and Portugal for having speedily responded to calls for assistance and for helping to restore law and order in Timor-Leste.

Timor-Leste is once again at a critical juncture in its young history. It would seem that, after the considerable efforts expended by the international community in building this nation, the violence of the past month has set back the progress achieved thus far. We are confident, however, that this is but a temporary bump in the road, for there is no smooth path to progress in Timor-Leste. After all, nation-building requires time, patience, sustained effort and deep commitment in order for the process to become irreversible.

International support is essential to keep Timor-Leste on the track of development. On this point, my delegation is of the view that the crucial engine that will drive Timor-Leste back onto the right track is a continued, sustained and appropriately constituted United Nations presence in that country. The United Nations should not abdicate its role in building up Timor-Leste. That country is considered one of the United Nations success stories and any effort that would result in the United Nations leaving should be eschewed.

What is needed right now is strategic planning in order to put Timor-Leste back on track and ensure that the significant gains achieved are not wasted. We hope that the UNOTIL rollover and the recent violence in Dili has given decision-makers time and the proper perspective to adequately plan for the future of Timor-Leste.

The continued United Nations presence should work to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Government of Timor-Leste, particularly in the

delivery of basic services, justice and economic development. An electoral component is also necessary to assist Timor-Leste in organizing next year's elections.

Inasmuch as law and order is a major concern, as we have seen in the past two months, a robust police component, as requested by the Government of Timor-Leste, is essential. It should not only perform operational policing but also plan and build the capacity of Timor-Leste's police force until it can act as an independent and professional law-enforcement agency.

My delegation takes note of the Government of Timor-Leste's request for the deployment of police units from the Philippines under the United Nations umbrella. We take this opportunity to thank the Government of Timor-Leste for its trust and confidence in requesting police units from the Philippines, which we view as a way of further contributing to peacekeeping operations in that country.

Prior to the events of the past two months, the experience of Timor-Leste had been one of the best examples of a successful international enterprise engineered through the combined, cooperative efforts of the United Nations and regional players and partners. Let us view Timor-Leste through the prism of optimism and pragmatism and act to ensure that this will continue to hold true. The events of the past months should serve as valuable lessons on the fluidity and uncertainties of peacebuilding in the United Nations context and should not deter us from our duty of pursuing it despite the odds.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Fiji, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Kau (Fiji): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your country's presidency of the Security Council for this month and to thank you for the opportunity to speak on this important issue concerning a member of our Alliance of Small Island States, an observer in our Pacific Islands Forum and the youngest member of our family of nations — Timor-Leste. I should like also to thank Special Envoy Ian Martin for his briefing and to commend the four countries — Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia and Portugal — for their briefings and their efforts on the ground.

Recent events in the country paint a picture of a young nation struggling to stand up to the challenges of

nationhood — challenges that are both vivid and vague. It is the vague ones that we stumble over when they manifest themselves. As in most developing countries, it does not take a major riot or much wanton destruction to upset the carefully planned Government processes or rend the people's hope for the future.

Five years after attaining independence, events have not proceeded as smoothly as many expected. Efforts to reorient the mindset of the people and redirect the energy to nation-building are never easy. Nation-building takes time and resources and is subject to a lot of internal and external considerations. Prominent among those considerations is the issue of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. It is the difficulties encountered during the demobilization and reintegration of the Timor-Leste security forces that caused the present impasse. When those difficulties are embroiled together with a feeling of being marginalized, a volatile mix is the result. All that was required was for someone to fan the flame for the volatility to explode.

Capacity-building and development and the establishment of new systems and institutional structures conducive to good governance and stable democracy are fundamental to ensuring peace, security and long-term stability and, ultimately, sustainable development. The effort to curb spending and reduce superfluous expenses has often met with opposition in almost all nations emerging from conflicts.

Every country needs peace and stability, including a stable, democratically elected Government, and Timor-Leste is no exception. The United Nations must be commended for its part in the start of Timor-Leste's journey, and it behooves the Organization to be seized with the development of its political and economic well-being. That of course can happen only with commensurate efforts from the people and Government. In this regard, Fiji supports and would welcome a sustained United Nations presence to guide the journey of Timor-Leste. Such a presence would also be indicative of the Organization's commitment to build on its considerable investment in Timor-Leste of more than six years.

With the provision of assistance through the proposed new United Nations mission, as requested by the Timor-Leste leaders, the Organization can better enable the Government to make further advances in fostering peace, stability and democracy. Should

assistance come from the newly established Peacebuilding Commission at a later date, it must be mindful of the sovereignty of the nation and Government of Timor-Leste. Assistance must be carried out in coherence with the United Nations offices on the ground to ensure that it is all well coordinated and in keeping with the wishes of the people, and can be sustained by their Government when the United Nations finally takes its leave.

Fiji participated in the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). The Government of Fiji will be willing to participate in a further peacekeeping role in Timor-Leste should it be asked. We look to the Security Council to pave the way for an extended United Nations presence and hopefully, in due course, the assistance of the Peacebuilding Commission to provide the much-needed advice and support that can ensure long-lasting peace and stability in Timor-Leste.

The President: I next give the floor to the representative of Indonesia.

Mr. Atiyanto (Indonesia): Since this is the first time my delegation is addressing the Council under Denmark's presidency, let me congratulate President Løj on assuming this important post. We are confident that under her able stewardship the Council will be very productive this month.

My delegation expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his statement and his Special Envoy, Mr. Ian Martin, for his informative briefing and for the work undertaken during his recent mission to Timor-Leste.

We have been closely following the situation in Timor-Leste. As its closest neighbour, we are very keen for the crisis in Timor-Leste to come to an end and for the situation to return to normalcy very soon. We are therefore heartened to learn that the security situation in the country is improving and that progress is being made to address problems in that area. My Government continues to support Timorese leaders in their efforts to find a durable solution to the crisis. We are confident that under their wise leadership, Timor-Leste will be able to resume its national development on a sounder foundation.

In this time of difficulties, Timor-Leste has nevertheless continued to cultivate and enjoy excellent bilateral relations with Indonesia. The rapport between

the leaders of our two countries remains strong. In this regard, President Xanana Gusmão and President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, will meet in Bali on 17 June to discuss issues of common concern and interest to both countries.

Against that background, we respect the decision taken by the Timor-Leste leadership to use any avenue it deems appropriate to help solve the problem in the country. Indonesia, for its part, has been doing its best to assist Timor-Leste, including the closure of our common land border to prevent any incidents that might complicate the situation. In addition, we have dispatched aid to help alleviate the humanitarian impact of this crisis on the Timorese people. My Government will continue to stand ready to provide assistance whenever needed.

In view of this current development, we believe that the United Nations should redouble its efforts to assist the Government of Timor-Leste in dealing with its pressing problems, so that its democratization process can be put back on track. While the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) certainly needs to evaluate its programme priorities in order to better preserve the achievements of the United Nations in the country, it should, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme, continue to support the Government in the economic, social and administrative fields. That will help restore normalcy to the country's political, economic and social life. Similarly, in helping Timor-Leste meet the challenges it now faces, the international community must remain responsive to its needs for assistance and support.

Indonesia, as a neighbour which shares a forward-looking vision with Timor-Leste based on the principles of peaceful coexistence, reconciliation and mutually beneficial relations, will, for its part, continue to assist Timor-Leste to ensure continued peace, stability and democracy in the country.

The President: I next give the floor to the representative of Singapore.

Mr. Menon (Singapore): Let me first thank Special Envoy Ian Martin for his update on the situation in Timor-Leste. I also join other speakers in commending the troops and police from Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand and Portugal for their assistance to Timor-Leste during this difficult period.

About five weeks ago, we deliberated on the importance of maintaining a continued United Nations presence in Timor-Leste. My delegation emphasized then that we should not be "penny wise and pound foolish". Instead, there was a need to remain engaged in the work of institution-building for Timor-Leste. I believe that many delegations shared these sentiments.

It is unfortunate that recent developments seem to have underlined the need for this approach. Timor-Leste has slid into instability just days after celebrating the fourth anniversary of independence. Two key institutions — the Timorese Armed Forces (F-FDTL) and the National Police Force of Timor-Leste (PNTL) — have unravelled before our eyes. We have seen appalling images of looting and hostilities. These events have been a stark reminder of how easily the peace and serenity of a new country can be shattered.

The deployment of troops and police from Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand and Portugal has restored a degree of calm. For this, those countries deserve much praise. However, massive displacement of people remains, and law and order has not been fully restored. Law and order must be re-established. The armed gangs must be apprehended and disarmed as an integral step in the restoration of peace and security so that people can return safely to their homes and jobs.

There is also an urgent need to resolve the differences among rival factions and to help rebuild institutions. The United Nations can assist in a thorough review of the reasons behind the rapid breakdown of law and order to prevent a recurrence of the problem, particularly when Timor-Leste holds elections next year. I call on the leaders and the people of Timor-Leste to speed up the process of national reconciliation and to act with the international community to address the problems at home.

The leaders of Timor-Leste have asked for assistance, in particular a longer United Nations presence. I hope that the Security Council will seriously consider that when it decides on a new mission mandate. It is important that the Council send a strong signal of support for the people of Timor-Leste by establishing an appropriate United Nations mission after UNOTIL. The successor mission must have a robust peacekeeping mandate. Peacekeeping under the leadership of the United Nations offers the best hope of pulling together the resources of Member States to address the situation in Timor-Leste in the longer term.

The President I now give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Choi Young-jin (Republic of Korea): Timor-Leste is one of the most remarkable United Nations successes in nation-building. However, recent political developments and the outbreak of fresh violence remind us that the country's democracy is still fragile and that the continued presence of the United Nations is highly important for maintaining peace and stability.

Since gaining its independence in 2002, Timor-Leste has moved forward on the road to peace, democracy and development, making steady progress in governance, institution-building and establishing the rule of law. That has been achieved through the work of the Government of Timor-Leste and the international community. But we should recognize that the journey has just begun. The situation remains fluid, and much remains to be done to ensure security and stability for Timor-Leste for the future.

We believe that Timor-Leste can and should stand on its own. The goal of the international community in Timor-Leste should be to help the people take full control of their country's affairs. Before that can take place, however, the international community will need to provide much more help. The international community should assist Timor-Leste in facing the many challenges ahead. Our assistance should be focused on helping the people of Timor-Leste to develop sustainable institutions and policies that support their new democracy, political stability and economic growth.

It is with great anxiety that, in recent weeks, we have watched the political tension in Timor-Leste erupt into violence. In particular, my Government is deeply concerned that approximately 100,000 people — or 10 per cent of the whole population of the country — have been driven from their homes to shelter camps. In that regard, my Government wishes to draw the attention of Member States to the flash appeal for humanitarian assistance for Timor-Leste made by United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations stationed in the country.

We are heartened that the leaders of Timor-Leste have been making determined efforts to stay united

during the current crisis and to take decisive measures to address the challenges faced by the country. That crisis has clearly revealed the underlying issues facing Timor-Leste and the steps that its leaders should take to bring about national unity.

The greatest challenge is the restoration of stability and order. The United Nations should strengthen its involvement in Timor-Leste to help overcome that challenge. Another formidable challenge ahead is the preparation for and conduct of its first presidential and parliamentary elections, slated for 2007. International support for the election process will be crucial, helping to consolidate the remarkable achievements already made in reconstruction and nation-building. We therefore believe that the international community should respond favourably to the needs of Timor-Leste for assistance and support in meeting those challenges.

In that regard, I would like to reiterate my Government's firm commitment to continue its strong support for Timor-Leste. Some 700 Korean troops participated for four years in the United Nations peacekeeping operations there, and we provided humanitarian and electoral assistance as well as economic and technical cooperation to help the Timorese people build their nation. Our collaboration with Timorese authorities to enhance food production by developing a new kind of corn — Timor Hybrid Number 1 — is a source of particular satisfaction. My Government stands ready to join the international community in assisting the people of Timor-Leste.

One of the most important United Nations successes is undergoing a crisis, and the international community must help. The international community has made a substantial investment in Timor-Leste's progress as a nation, and we encourage its many international supporters to continue their assistance to ensure that the Timorese continue on their journey to a stable and sustainable future.

The President There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.